

## Public Comments on the Vermont Climate Action Commission July 31, 2018 Final Report<sup>1</sup>

The following comments were submitted for the Governor's consideration as he reviews the Vermont Climate Action Commission's Final Report. They are presented in the order in which they were received.

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**Date:** 08/01/2018

**Name:** Rob Gaiotti

**Email:** robtgaiotti@gmail.com

**Comment:** The Climate Action Commission report fails to explain how the Vermont economy will not be harmed by implementing the items suggested. The goals are worthy and laudable. The only way to achieve these goals would be to have large sustained population and private sector growth to increase available resources. All examples touted as economic growth are just cost shifts for goods (fuels etc.) from one source to another. The report makes the interesting assumption that most of the \$500 million on heating fuels goes to out of State sources. Yes, the product comes from out of State but there are many thousands of jobs associated with bringing fuel and services to homes and businesses. The administration talks about economic opportunity and changing our demographic trajectory, all very much needed. However, Vermont's policies are geared toward doing the exact opposite, and they've been quite successful over the last 40 years. This report is just a continuation of the effort to make sure Vermont is unaffordable for the average person.

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**Date:** 08/06/2018

**Name:** Jim Sullivan

**Email:** jsullivan@bcrcvt.org

**Comment:** I'd first like to thank all of the members of the Vermont Climate Action Commission (VCAC) and the many people who provided support and guidance during the process. The Report's findings and recommendations reinforce many of the ideas and implementation strategies advanced in previous studies while also exploring some new approaches that reflect the administration's priorities.

It is worth noting that all of Vermont's regional planning commissions (RPC) have completed comprehensive energy plans pursuant to Act 174 and are assisting local governments across the state with the development of municipal energy plans. Each of these local and regional plans contain recommendations, based on detailed analyses of energy supply, demand, and short and long term projections, for local and regional actions that can, collectively, help Vermont realize its statewide goals related to greenhouse gas emissions and energy generation and use. It would seem appropriate, therefore, that a leading recommendation of the Climate Action Commission report would be to provide support for RPC-led work focusing on implementation of those local and regional plans.

The VCAC report does a commendable job of analyzing multiple sectors and resources and generating recommendations within each of several key areas. Because energy planning is so complex, with issues and opportunities touching on interconnected technical, economic, social, and environmental concerns, a

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<sup>1</sup> Most comments were submitted via the Agency of Natural Resource's website. Several submissions came in the form of email communications and emailed letters. In those instances, the submissions were formatted to match the style associated with the web-based submission form.

lengthy list of recommended actions is as inevitable as it is appropriate. The VCAC Report organizes the discussion and recommendations in a logical manner and also identifies well-reasoned general priorities. I concur with those priorities, while suggesting that it would be valuable to identify the most critical areas for action, and to present further details on a few related proposals that should be given the greatest attention and provided with maximum support. It is too easy to get lost in a blizzard of excellent ideas and then fail to take decisive action where it would have the greatest effect.

Within the general priorities of the VCAC Report, I would advocate for a strong focus on providing state resources to support the following outcomes, at least in the short-term:

- Providing financial incentives and infrastructure to support a relatively rapid shift to electric vehicles (EVs) in the passenger vehicle fleet.
- A broad-based effort to weatherize buildings, especially older residential buildings and including rental as well as owner-occupied housing units. A coordinated and streamlined process is needed to ensure that cost-effectiveness is optimized among existing weatherization service providers.
- Support for widespread adoption of renewable resource based “alternative” heating systems, especially systems using wood-based fuels and electricity (heat pump systems). Support would involve training for businesses starting and transitioning into the field and incentives for conversion by homeowners and landlords/building owners.

Many of the Report’s recommendations touch, directly or indirectly, on those priorities and provide a useful basis for moving forward. I would like to see a short section that drives home the point that progress in these three areas, driven by specific detailed policies and investment strategies, should be at the forefront of legislative and administrative actions.

I often have lamented the excessive focus, in energy-related reports and discussions, on the development of local renewable-based electricity generation. It is a positive feature of the VCAC Report that transportation, building efficiency, heating fuels and technologies, and land use issues are highlighted. At the same time, significant new electricity generation from local renewable sources must be a component of Vermont’s strategy for achieving its climate/energy goals and for future economic prosperity. It would have been useful to address the topic a bit more directly. I will include a couple of thoughts on this topic in my notes on various Report recommendations.

#### Comments on Selected Recommendations

##### Homes and Workplaces

REC #1, Low-Income Weatherization: As weatherization of homes of low-income residents advances, the need for inefficient subsidization of fossil fuel purchases declines; reduced LIHEAP spending should be considered as a revenue source for weatherization. Greater oversight and coordination among weatherization providers is needed to maximize efficiency. Also, expanded efforts are needed to include rental housing in these and related programs.

REC #2, Advanced Wood Heat: I agree with the statement that this transition is “essential.” We observed in our region a major institution replacing its aging oil boilers with a CNG system, a change that improved efficiency and reliability, but because of the vast amount of fossil fuels consumed by that one user, makes attainment of our regional goals for space heating with renewables virtually impossible to achieve over the next 30 years. Greater consideration should be given to requiring use of AWH systems when considering public investments in those facilities and during permitting.

REC #3, Heat Pumps: I would just add a note that these conversions should be accompanied by a building energy audit. Implementing weatherization improvements will make the heat pumps much more effective and reduce the need for supplemental fossil fuel based heating.

REC #5, Building Energy Labeling: Does the labeling requirement contemplate some other/permanent way to record and preserve this information?

REC #6, Energy Efficiency Utility Weatherization Programs: See comments under REC #1, above, especially using these utilities/programs to address rental housing. Close to 40 percent of the total housing stock in the largest town in our region is rental housing and most of it is very old and inefficient. I think the same can be said for much of Vermont. Unfortunately, incentives for landlords to weatherize are notoriously lacking.

#### Getting Around

It would be good to devote an entire recommendation to electric assist bicycles (“e-bikes”). The market for e-bikes is taking off nationally and world-wide. E-bikes are much more affordable than EVs (electric and phev cars), are more efficient, and offer an enjoyable way to get around town.

In general, I’d devote more attention at encouraging acquisition and use of EVs than charging and charging infrastructure. I don’t see EV charging as being much of a problem since most charging can be done at home (certainly, it is nice to have charging stations at workplaces and for public use, but the majority of charging for Vermont residents can be done at home). Moreover, the cost of electricity is less than the cost of gasoline per mile driven and the price is much less volatile (in fact, electricity cost shouldn’t be seen as a problem, but as a selling point for EVs).

REC #8, EV Purchase Incentive: Absolutely essential. One idea is for Efficiency Vermont to invest heavily in purchase incentives; resulting increases in electricity usage would generate more funds to provide more purchase incentives...

REC #10 and 16, EV Dealers: In my experience, many (most?) dealers do not understand EVs, having a hard time answering basic questions about everything from technology to tax credits, and many certainly don’t appreciate the value and benefits of EVs. Many dealers who could don’t even stock them, let alone actively market them. Clearly, dealer education efforts are needed.

REC #11 and 12, EV Charging: Good ideas, but more beneficial in the short-term would be provision of free charging stations for EV owners for their homes. With so many two-plus vehicle households, convincing people that it is wise to have one EV for local use and a PHEV (or PHEVs) for longer trips, would get Vermont on track with meeting transportation energy goals even without numerous widely deployed charging stations. The fact that you can fill-up overnight, at home, is another great EV virtue.

REC #14 and 15 (note 14 is misnumbered in the report), Public EV Awareness and Education: These recommendations coordinate well with many of the RPC energy plan implementation strategies regarding public and dealer education efforts.

REC #17, EV Car Share/Rentals, etc.: Consider outreach/incentives to businesses to purchase or lease EVs/PHEVs (and even e-bikes for local use) as company cars for employee use. Also, investigate car share arrangements at apartment complexes so that all residents do not need to own their own car – and encourage EVs as part of those fleets.

REC #18, Electric Buses: Better than spending the money on new diesel vehicles and equipment, but: How much of the VW settlement is going to electric buses? Will the rollout be widespread enough to make an impression around the state? How will it lead to more electric bus deployment in the future?

REC #19, Electric Bus Cost: Maybe this analysis would answer some of the questions I posed regarding Recommendation #18!

REC #20, Public Transit: This recommendation properly focuses attention on populations without access to a car (until gas becomes genuinely unaffordable, it will be difficult to impossible to get current car owners into buses). I struggle some with a “transit solution,” though, when I think about the evident need in our region (as one example) for transportation for people living in and around downtowns to access grocery stores, state offices, and other services that are not located within walking distance of where they live. The transit solution, while an appropriate short-term response, reduces the demand for the more efficient and cost-effective solution of moving the goods and services closer to the people (and vice versa).

REC #21, School Transportation: Walking and biking to school also is valuable from a public health standpoint. Looking at the overflowing high school parking lots in our region, I wonder if charging for a parking pass would be a good idea – might discourage use of private cars, reduce the amount of the campuses that are paved, and provide some money that could be used for safe routes to school improvements.

REC #22, Promote Walking and Biking: Tremendously important for energy, GHG, public health, tourism, and economic reasons. And yet permitting and design requirements for bike-ped projects in Vermont are major impediments. Projects specifically for bike-ped facilities should be exempted from these onerous requirements that cause delay, cost escalation, and generally prevent projects from being built. The vast benefits of these projects are being sacrificed for no or minimal gain. Limit review to concerns about safety while making bike-ped projects genuine “categorical exclusions.” A culture change at VTrans, ANR, and other state agencies is needed.

REC #23, Multi-Modal Transportation: The role of rail transportation is important now and will be crucial in the future, especially for tourism. Look at innovative ways to connect more communities to the interstate rail system, such as the “Shires Connector,” a direct bus link between Manchester and Bennington and the Albany, NY Amtrak station. Extending passenger rail service throughout Vermont is difficult and expensive, but making efficient connections to passenger rail service from throughout Vermont can be done fairly easily.

#### Communities and Landscapes

REC # 25 and 26, Development and Smart Growth Measures: OK, although acknowledge that there is not much development, and a fair bit of negative net growth, in much of the state. Preserving village centers and downtowns and creating the potential for future growth in those areas is fundamental.

REC #27, Implement Smart Growth: Point 3 regarding wastewater is essential. There will be no smart growth without it in many communities. Currently, towns are unwilling to invest in costly infrastructure when their recent experience involves no growth and economic stagnation. Unless the costs are brought down dramatically, it will be hard to convince towns to invest.

REC #28, Health Care Partnerships: It is a good idea to focus attention on the critical nature of behavioral change at the individual level and the relationship between public health and energy goals. Also, consistent emphasis on healthy community design in all planning and development work.

REC #31 and 32, Forest Blocks, River Corridors: The goal of maintaining large forest blocks should not be used to thwart all utility scale wind energy development, something that must be accommodated in Vermont for the state to meet its renewable energy generation and use goals. Similarly, restrictions on development in river corridors shouldn't prevent all bike/multi-use path development; these areas often

are the best transportation corridors. Low cost, replaceable pathway design makes sense in many of these areas.

#### Sequestering Carbon

It is good that the Report recognizes the importance of carbon sequestration and proposes ideas for improvements in Vermont, which certainly should be pursued. At the same time, Vermont is quite effective on the sequestration front relative to much of the rest of the country. The incremental benefit of improvements in this area are likely to be less significant in terms of meeting our energy and GHG goals than those in some of the other areas covered in the report.

REC # 34 and 36, Agriculture and Carbon Sequestration: Agricultural practices and sequestration should be noted along with the critical role of locally produced food (a fact which, while explicitly not included in this report, should be mentioned given its great potential in the areas of energy conservation and the state's economy). It also should be recognized that parts of Vermont, such as Bennington County, have seen extensive conversion of farm land back to forest land in recent decades. Maintaining forests shouldn't necessarily prevent reclamation of some forested areas, with productive soils, for agricultural uses – or other uses that provide net environmental benefits.

REC #40, 41, and 42: All good and important points.

#### Jobs and the Economy

As noted in my general comments, electricity generation from renewables is conspicuous due to its absence, although it is refreshing to see more discussion of biomass heating and smart grid issues. Given the administration's opposition to large-scale wind energy projects in Vermont, I wish the Report had taken the opportunity to at least point out that attainment of the state's energy goals is unattainable without such wind-energy development unless we are ok with the prospects of (1) blanketing the landscape with far more solar arrays (and consequential profound seasonal grid imbalance – and even more spending on vast storage projects) than would be required with greater use of wind resources and/or (2) much greater than anticipated reliance on highly speculative and less efficient imported renewables (with their own attendant environmental problems). The current anti-wind policy direction seems contrary to the Report's stated intention of finding ways to keep energy spending and related economic benefits local – and I think that should be presented for discussion.

The recommendations offer a useful focus on enhancements to economic incentive programs for businesses.

REC #52, Electric Cost for Wood Pellet Manufacture: It makes sense to incentivize the use of renewables (electricity from renewable sources, in this case, and also for biomass) for pellet manufacturing to reduce the imbedded fossil fuel energy in that fuel and to increase its net energy yield.

REC #53, Permitting for Wood Pellet Plants: Could make this point for most land uses. I hope that most pellet plants are being planned for industrial parks and other land designated for such uses by current local and regional plans.

#### Conclusion

Page 85, first paragraph regarding Carbon Pricing: Thank you for the bold statement!

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**Date:** 08/6/2018

**Name:** John Ennis

**Email:** johnennis1958@gmail.com>

**Comment:**

No where in this report is there a recommendation for employers to encourage them to support more work from home opportunities for their employees. I work in Healthcare and there are dozens of jobs done at our local critical access hospital that could be done from home. This would reduce the number of cars commuting to and from work every day, with only one person in that vehicle. Taking these vehicles off the road would help in reducing greenhouse gases.

John Ennis  
Bethel, VT

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Jeffrey Phillips

**Email:** jeffmphilips@me.com

**Comment:** If you are elected to an other term, you must prioritize and fund Climate Action activities. We cannot afford to keep kicking the can down the road. Our future and our children's future depend on it.  
Jeffrey Phillips Shelburne

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Comment:** I was disappointed to learn that the Commission was not fully representative of Vermonters that care deeply about climate change & our own human impact on the environment. Furthermore, the plan put forth is not "actionable." • The time is NOW for Vermont to stand up as a leader in the movement towards reducing our carbon footprint, enacting legislation to help protect our environment, and do all we can to clean up the mess we have made!

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Nancy Spears

**Email:** Tspears@gmavt .net

**Comment:** Disappointed in this non-report. VT needs to be a leader in addressing climate change. Renewable energy has never been more affordable or important.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Comment:** Very disappointed in your inability to put forth a meaningful, actionable climate plan.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Ryan Darlow

**Email:**

**Comment:** When it comes to climate change issues, Governor Phil Scott is driving Vermont backwards just like President Trump. While he pretends to act in the interests of the majority of Vermonters, who are supportive of climate change initiatives and the development of local, distributed renewable energy, his actions are firmly against our climate and our clean energy economy. As an example of Governor Scott's

actions contradicting his words, he rendered his Vermont Climate Action Commission inept and without purpose when he appointed one of Vermont's leading anti-renewable energy advocates to its leadership. In addition, by creating an excessively large and cumbersome 21 member panel, the Governor was fully aware of it having no capabilities to effectively take any significant action towards reducing Vermont's impact on our climate. It therefore comes as no surprise that the Vermont Climate INACTION Commission, was unable to recommend that Vermont take the most obvious actions to mitigate our environmental impacts. Those actions would be to simultaneously significantly increase Vermont's fleet of renewable energy generation and electrify our heating and transportation systems which are Vermont's leading sources of greenhouse gas emissions.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Jessica Rubin

**Email:** yepeth@gmail.com

**Comment:** Hi there. I am disappointed in the lack of a tangible climate action plan. Please check in with the valuable resourceful people around you such as 350.org, VNRC, Soils 4 a Healthy Climate, VPIRG, and various other local groups to create a plan where VT can be a leader for a resilient future. thank you!

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Susan Hodges

**Email:** sshodges13@gmail.com

**Comment:** As a full time Vermont resident, and a voter, I am extremely disappointed with your policies on climate change and curbing carbon pollution. Your Commission was a joke, overloaded with industry interests and almost no representation of all of us who are affected by climate change and concerned about the climate. Your Commission did NOT come up with an actual plan. I am not fooled. You will just disregard the Commission's recommendations while using it to bolster your campaign. I hope you start taking climate change and carbon pollution seriously, but I'll only believe it when I see you actually taking meaningful and effective actions to address climate change and carbon pollution in Vermont. Sincerely, Susan Hodges

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Asa Skinder

**Email:** asaskinder@gmail.com

**Comment:** This report has no meaningful responses or plans regarding the concerns vermonters have about the environment or climate. Scott should be ashamed to publish this. As a young person in the state of vermont, I am excited to vote him out!

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Comment:** I do not believe Governor Phil Scott to be concerned about the environment. Apparently he does not want to make Vermont the number one leader in the country for real progressive environmental change. To truly move us forward we must work together to put an end to carbon emissions, take Vermont off of all fossil fuel dependency, use solar and wind power, have all buses and public transportation electric. Let's be the leader we know we can be!

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Susan Williams

**Email:** swilliams.bfv@yahoo.com

**Comment:** Vermont needs to quickly develop and implement a clear and concise plan to address climate change and eliminate fossil fuel in Vermont. We can make Vermont a role model for the rest of the country, and create an industry and jobs in Vermont around conservation and alternative energy. The Vermont Climate Action Commission needs to have representation from all the environmental protection interests in Vermont. The present plan and Commission does not appear to meet any of these criteria.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Betsy Emerson

**Email:** betsyemerson3@gmail.com

**Comment:** I believe that the report of the Climate Action Commission is not worth the paper it was written on. In this age of rapid heating of the planet and multiple floods and hurricanes, something stronger needs to be put forth - a curb on carbon emissions, for one. Please do something! I fear for this planet. Vermont has been a leader in so many things. Let solid climate change action be one of them!  
Betsy Emerson, Richmond

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** William White

**Email:** willwhite67@hotmail.com

**Comment:** This report was a waste of time and resources. I'm very disappointed in the Scott administration and that will be reflected in my choices in the voting booth in November.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Jessica

**Email:**

**Comment:** YIKES! Governor Scott's alleged support of Vermont's climate commitments and the Paris Climate Accord were grossly disguised. We applauded you once, but we sure made a mistake. I can understand the need to keep Vermont's economy afloat, but at the expense of our environment and future? Disappointed. Not winning me, my family, or my fellow constituents over on this one. Please consider a complete overhaul of Vermont's current climate actions - stop the hypocrisy.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Glenna Copeland

**Email:** copelandsvt@aol.com

**Comment:** I am disappointed in your lack of leadership on climate change and lake clean-up. Both which affect our children and the economy of our state.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Lindsay Putnam

**Email:** lindsay.putnam@dartmouth.edu

**Comment:** More needs to be done to control affects of climate change than the report from the Climate Action suggests. There must be financial accountability - a carbon tax - before most people will make any changes. We should also be demanding that the federal government increase mileage standards on new cars. Vermont is a leader on environmental issues usually. This is embarrassing that we are not doing as much as we should. We should be in line with CA and demanding from Congress to be allowed to have our own mileage and emissions standards that equal California's. We should be implementing major

incentives for new technologies in carbon soil sequestration and solar technologies. We will not be able to do enough to mitigate all the damage, but must do as much as possible.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Raymond Denney

**Email:** raydenney@together.net

**Comment:** If you all aren't republicans, I'll eat my hat. Typical "I've got mine" attitude. Ignore science, adore \*rump. You sicken me.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Nancy Bretschneider

**Email:** joyofbeingvt@gmail.com

**Comment:** It is very disheartening to me that Gov. Scott and the Vermont Climate Action Committee have not produced an actionable plan for the climate crisis here in Vermont. We are all counting on you to do better ..... and soon! Having more environmentalists on your committee would be a very positive step. Sincerely, Nancy Bretschneider

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Linda Hecker

**Email:** Lhecker@landmark.edu

**Comment:** AS chair of the Guilford Conservation Commission, I looked forward to reading the report of the Vermont Climate Action Commission. I was disappointed by the lack of a clear action plan, with timetables and assigned responsibilities, as well as omission of a carbon taxing initiative.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Peter Bourne

**Email:** peter@bournes.net

**Comment:** Peter;

Some of my points are jaded no doubt but you can either delete or recycle as you see fit. Overall a very good piece of work and your patience to get through this project is "medal worthy".

Page 10 \$500 million in import fossil-based fuels, does this include bio products and it would make me less jaundiced if the amount sent out of state and country for electricity could be brought into a closely tied into paragraph.

Page 11 a better definition of local electricity, as any hydro out of Canada is considered renewable now, last (5/6 years) is it also local. It would be helpful for some input for Agency of Natural Resources and the states stand on dam relicensing and what is the balanced approach. Cross purpose seems to be a message out there.

Page 13 as part of the financing for weatherization, can the state take 2nd mortgages on homes at some level to encourage a better weatherization program. I am assuming the banks with that sort of security might be a little more friendly and it might help move the dial.

Page 15 story on grid capacity is confusing to me, with the amount of solar on system we are still hearing about new summer peaks, what is the plan for similar loads in the winter seasons, if electric heating

returns the peak to the colder months what does the transmission system look like under that sort of stress?

Page 29 what is there to consider for a "tax/fee) on electric vehicles to help support the infrastructure. I agree they are a good alternative but when will, and what will it look like when EVs have to help pay for roads as well as the recharging infrastructure.

Page 39 with electric bikes becoming more main stream it makes the idea of a pedestrian and bike path systems a higher priority

Page 59 we so many of these ideas and so few dollars (I think the VW money has been spent at least 10 times) could the state sell carbon off sets from their own forest. If feasible this money would help in supporting programs and maybe an untapped financial resource.

I am disappointed on the lack of discussion on Bio fuels (recycled) at times I feel like I walked into the room at the end of a conversation. It would seem in the rural areas of Vt. can help make the dial jump a bit with it's use. With technology changing it is just time that will bring the newest alternative equipment into these homes at a functional and affordable rate. It feels like the most purest of people want it all to go away. Between using it as a % of heating and getting the large trucking companies even to use it in the warm months will help the dial. Feels like everyone maybe concerned that it could be part of the solution.

Thank you

Peter Bourne

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Comment:** Where's the beef?

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Erik Nielsen

**Email:** erik@eriknielsenmusic.com

**Comment:** This report is a sham, and the commission and you ought to be ashamed! My granddaughter will have to live with the results of essentially doing nothing to curb climate change. Instead of coming up with solid recommendations, including carbon pricing, placed in priority order, we are left with 50 vague generalities. I'm disgusted with this colossal waste of time. A short-sighted view of economic development as exclusionary of environmental stewardship is no excuse for inaction. We can and must do better.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Catherine Kidder

**Email:** ckidder28@gmail.com

**Comment:** Climate change is the most pressing concern on the planet; nothing is more important than doing absolutely everything in our power to prevent further degradation of our life-sustaining earth. With federal leadership totally absent, in fact, promoting the very things that contribute to climate change, the states need to do the responsible thing and step into the void of leadership. I'm appalled that a year was spent by the Climate Action Committee with no actionable outcome and that Gov. Scott is following the lead of others in his party to ignore what's happening all around us, and right here in our state. He had

the courage to buck the gun lobby, now he must muster the courage to lead Vermont in responding to what looks to be the end game for our planet if smart action is not taken NOW.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Christa Wurm

**Email:** christa.wurm@gmail.com

**Comment:** I am tremendously disappointed in the budget cuts of Efficiency VT and Clean Energy Development Fund; decline in solar economy - new fees AND a way for companies to get out of it!! We need to make clean energy and reduced waste the ONLY smart business decisions - THERE IS NOTHING if the climate is not here. I understand he was trying to be positive, but referring to refugees from areas severely impacted by Climate Change as an economic boon gives excuses to continue to do little to nothing to shift the trajectory. Unclear as to the goals of removing specific language referring to Climate Change in the proposed Act 250 overhaul. We need to lead the way. YOU need to lead the way. You will likely win re-election - please do what's right and not what's easy. Each year, each month, is tremendously important.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Bill Riley

**Email:** wlpriley@comcast.net

**Comment:** Dear Governor Scott -- Climate change isn't a game -- it isn't a political football. You owe it to the people of Vermont to go to the Global Climate Action Summit in California. I guess NOT going will get you a pat on the back from Trump and his sycophants. Stop looking the other way on environmental issues -- kicking the environmental can down the road for another few years is unacceptable. Please REPRESENT the interests of the people of Vermont. Thanks.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Peter Orgain

**Email:** porgain@gmail.com

**Comment:** Dear Governor Scott - I am disappointed by the failure of your Climate Action Commission to deliver a realistic, actionable report based on public input and renewable resources. Instead, we got a Trump-like report, pussy footing around while Vermont faces a very insecure future, both for climate and energy. Shame on you and your commission! I hope that this is your last term!

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Steve Hood

**Email:** SteveHood@FlourishFarm.com

**Comment:** Governor Scott - In the past year since Vermont joined the U.S. Climate Alliance, you and your administration have taken actions inconsistent with our respect for the environment, our values as Vermonters and an evolving, climate balanced economy. Specifically, Proposed slashing Efficiency Vermont's budget and pushed a \$4m loophole for businesses to opt out of Efficiency Vermont (an established, successful model that is rapidly becoming a model for other states), Proposed draining the Clean Energy Development Fund and overseeing the largest ever decline in Vermont's solar industry and proposed a plan for Volkswagen settlement funds that would allow 70% to be used to subsidize diesel vehicles. Contrary to "no new taxes and fees", signed new fee on solar farms, supports tax on EV charging - actively sacrificing support of progressive technologies. In the absence of any real commitment to the environment, and mimicking the complete failure of the current administration in Washington, we can only assumed that like too many others, your strategy will be to straddle the fence, regain office, and continue with the same policies and practices. It's unfortunate in a state that prides itself on its

environment and it's integrity and unless we see meaningful change, we'll be actively working to replace you in our statehouse. Steve Hood

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Comment:** You were brave and of good conscience when you acted against assault rifles. Now be the same in protecting the environment in which Bermonsters live: don't obscure and waffle; BE PURPOSEFUL AND PROVIDE FIRM LEADERSHIP to institute measures which will purify our streams, rivers and lakes, clean our soils and air, and prevent BT from turning into a vast suburb!

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Timothy Hoopes

**Email:** thoopes@gmavt.net

**Comment:** The time for more reports and surveys and findings is over, the time for action is behind us already and the State Government of Vermont is not doing anything substantive yet. This is truly pathetic. The biggest thing we can do is move away from Fossil Fuels as rapidly as possible. We must stop the burning of these fuels and instead switch to renewable forms of energy. The three biggest areas to address are Electricity Generation, Home Heating and Vehicular Transportation. We must take bold action in these areas. Already individuals and companies are moving, it is time for the State Government to get on the move. Now.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Comment:** Vermont's value is measured by the quality of its environment. Any delay in putting in place a plan that protects that environment will accelerate the devaluation of Vermont's assets. First and foremost should be the protection of our air and water quality, as both are essential for life, period. Business will benefit from clean air and water, as prospective employees will want to live and work here.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Terence Cuneo

**Email:** Tcuneo@uvm.edu

**Comment:** We are in dire need of an actionable plan. We need to act quickly and decisively

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** John Lewis

**Email:** jellbelltell@gmail.com

**Comment:** I urge the Governor (and the Agency if so designated) to come up with a plan to aggressively work to reduce carbon emissions in Vermont. The Commissions report is not a plan, but rather a list of ideas. National and international reports this summer on the projected increase in global temperatures highlight the urgency of tackling global warming. Failure to do so will doom future generations to a planet that will not support human life.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Mary B Brown

**Email:**

**Comment:** You need only look at the fire and flooding issues in our country to realize we need to seriously address climate issues. We can't afford to continue to push the issue down the road. I want your admin to be proactive on climate issues. No more stalling.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Sebastian Wu

**Email:** sebbiwu@gmail.com

**Comment:** Governor Scott, we need to come up with climate solutions that reflect the scope of the problem facing the whole world today. Unfortunately, though you created the Climate Action Commission, neither the Commission nor you have anything to show for the supposed effort. You have the opportunity to convince me and the rest of Vermont that this is not just designed to be a talking point, something that you believe can be swept under the rug without your constituents noticing. Be thoughtful. You showed that you were unwilling to listen to Vermonters when you ignored the public comments in favor of carbon pricing at the four Climate Action Forums last fall, but you still have the chance to make a lasting impact. Please step up to the plate and help move our state forward on climate because it is imperative that we act now.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** William Roy

**Email:** roybil@gmail.com

**Comment:** Because we must! Read some scientific reports of changes in the Arctic and along our own shorelines. Trumpians are wrong. Scientific method of study is right!

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** charles parent

**Email:** cparent@gmavt.net

**Comment:** I wish you would do more to protect the environment! The climate commission has been a failure. Cleaning up lake Champlain has been a failure. Switching to renewables and away from fossil fuels has been a failure. Your attitude towards a carbon tax is wrong headed. You may say one thing but do the opposite. You appoint people to agencies that are ineffective. We need bold leadership! We need to be a leader in the nation with regards to renewable energy, electric vehicles, cold climate heat pumps, energy efficiency and conservation. We need to get off our addiction to fossil fuels. We need a green economy and a healthy environment.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** CR Lill

**Email:** clillnow@hotmail.com

**Comment:** Am very disappointment in the final report from the Climate Action Commission. Please for all our sakes, including yourself & your loved ones please go back to the drawing board and come up with a more meaningful actionable climate plan. It might help to have a new, well rounded representation of committee members. Thx, CR

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Dori Wolfe

**Email:** dori.wolfe@gmail.com

**Comment:** We need an actionable plan that will draw down carbon pollution. The best way (in fact the

only way that can be incorporated fast enough to be effective) is through legislation for a carbon fee and dividend - putting a price on carbon pollution, a market adjustment, so that polluters into the atmosphere need to pay a "tipping fee" as do those who send trash to the landfill. The Vermont Climate Action Commission's report is lacking in this regard.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** marc silver

**Email:** mlsilver@comcast.net

**Comment:** Please! How about a concrete plan of action, not a laundry list of issues and potential approaches. The tendency to favor private sector profit-oriented corporations is NOT what we need (e.g., the revision of the solar energy parameters by the public utility commission to protect the interests of private energy companies like GMP by screwing the residents who invested in clean renewable solar production).

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Guy Williamson

**Email:** Williamsguy@msn.com

**Comment:** Dear Governor Scott, Please consider a more actionable alternative to your administration's current climate proposal. A carbon tax seems like the simplest option and it is widely supported in our state. It would make easier for me if to vote Republican again. Thank you for your consideration and your service. Guy A. Williamson South Burlington

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Dottie Nelson

**Email:** dottielson2@gmail.com

**Comment:** Hello Gov. Scott. I believe action to address climate change is the most important thing we can do as citizens of the US. Unless we have a liveable planet all the other problems we face, and there are many and they are big, will seem like nothing. The New York Times devoted it's entire Sunday magazine on August 5 to climate change and how we have known for 30 years that the problems we are now seeing (huge storms, a warming ocean, climate refugees, etc) were going to happen and we did nothing to stop them. We let oil and gas and coal companies tell us it was all a hoax. Now we're seeing the results of our complacency and we have to change. Vermont is a unique State and people look to us to lead the way in addressing problems relating to the human causes of climate change. I am writing to ask that you support the ideas in the Climate Change Report. I wish you were planning to attend the climate meeting in California in September to work with others to address this problem. I doubt that it's too late to change your mind and I hope you'll consider it. The future of all of us, all living beings on Earth, as well as the planet itself, depend on how we treat the planet now. We certainly are not going to get any type of leadership from our current President and Congress so it is up to each of us to do our part to make things better. Please make sure that Vermont, as a State, does it's part. Thank you.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Comment:** Climate Change is the most pressing humanitarian crisis of our time. The evidence is all around us, it cannot be denied, and the sooner we act, the sooner we can save our planet and ourselves. It is crucial that you as Governor lead Vermont, and indeed this country, with policies that support sustainable energy solutions and keep fossil fuels in the ground. Listen to environmental advocates and to the overwhelming majority of Vermont's voters: we need resilience, we need a price on carbon pollution, we

need help to invest in solar and save money. You say you want to focus on the economy and jobs - we have already seen what green jobs can do for our economy and we need to increase those jobs! It makes sense since in turn the state will save money. There are plenty of reports out there to prove the case. PLEASE LISTEN TO VERMONTERS AND TO THOSE IN THE KNOW ABOUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO OUR ENVIRONMENT IN THE FUTURE. THESE ARE DIRE WARNINGS, AND YOU CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!!  
Thanks

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** peter souza

**Email:** eastgsdvt@yahoo.com

**Comment:** Gov. Scott corrupted the process from day one, stacking the commission with industry representatives and Administration officials. Seven Days described the commission as "a bloated, 21-member panel representing just about every interest group in Vermont except for blacksmiths and barbers. There's only one " count 'em, one " environmental advocate on board."1 Even more troubling, halfway through the public hearing process " where Vermonters were overwhelmingly calling for a price on carbon pollution " the governor tweeted his opposition to the concept, thereby instructing his commission to disregard public input (and the work of countless economists). The report is not a plan, but rather a cobbled-together, unranked list of more than 50 recommendations varying in size, scope and specificity. Remember: the sole purpose of the commission was to put forward an actionable plan to meet our climate and energy commitments, but most of the report is just a warmed over recitation of solutions that have been on the table " and we have known we should be pursuing " for years. Even commission co-chair and Deputy of the Agency of Natural Resources Peter Walke noted "I wouldn't use this as the basis to say, 'if we did all these things we would get there.'"2 And perhaps most importantly, unless Gov. Scott pulls a 180 on climate, this report is meaningless. On climate, Phil Scott says one thing, then does another. If past is prologue, he will likely use the report as a rhetorical shield during the campaign this fall, then put it on the shelf when it is time to actually lead. For, when given the opportunity in his two years as chief executive, Gov. Scott has acted against the best interest of the climate and a 21st century economy at almost every turn. In doing so, he's leaving job-creating opportunities on the table and Vermonters vulnerable to the instability of imported fossil fuels and a dramatically overheating planet. The Climate "Action" Commission has been a total mess from the start, but we wanted to give it time to play out and give Gov. Scott the chance to prove us wrong. We were prepared for disappointment " and unfortunately that's exactly what we got.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Comment:** The vermont climate action report is a joke. If governor Scott cannot give our environment too priority I will be voting democratic in november. I voted for Phil last time around.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Sari Wolf

**Email:** flrwomon@outlook.com

**Comment:** your climate change report is a scam and quite partisan. You try to fool the public by saying you stand with the Paris climate accord, but by doing so you are just weakening the higher standards we had in VT prior to your time as governor. You should be ashamed, and stop thinking you are fooling the public, we know you are not on the side of the climate, or the regular people for that matter.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Steven Wisbaum

**Email:** steven@ecoequipmentsupply.com

**Comment:** Although the purpose of the Climate Action Commission was to develop a MEANINGFUL AND ACTIONABLE plan to meet VT's climate and energy commitments, this report instead simply contains an list of recommendations with minimal scope and specificity. The extreme weather events over the past few years as well as the current global heat wave should be a wake-up call that we are quickly running out of time to address the threat of anthropogenic climate change, but this report falls way short of the bold leadership and actions that are needed.

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**Date:** 08/15/2018

**Name:** Jack Clay

**Email:** jclay.second@gmail.com

**Comment:** What a waste of taxpayers' money. Why ignore the input of Vermonters who chose to make their viewpoints known in order to create a report that substantially rehashes old talking points with the goal of giving the Governor what he wanted in the first place?

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** Sylvie Desautels

**Email:** sylviedesautels@gmail.com

**Comment:** I am more that concerned about the pace of action from Vermont leaders in passing and funding legislation toward meeting the stated 90% by 2050 goals. The recent report of Vermont's carbon emissions increase is incorrigible (16%). Individual Vermonters are doing a lot but we will not even begin to reach these achievable goals without institutional scale renewable energy systems and carbon pricing mechanism. There are scores and scores of examples of how this is being accomplished throughout the world. We do not have to reinvent the wheel. My husband and I are looking to purchase an electric vehicle. We live off the grid so powering it ourselves is not possible. And there are not EV charging stations near enough to us to make this possible. This is not acceptable. Many people want to do the right thing but are held back by the lack of foresight and commitment to decarbonizing our energy systems. The time is NOW. Enough words. Action is crucial.

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** Timothy O'Dell

**Email:** todell6@juno.com

**Comment:** Governor Scott, The Climate Action Commission, we come to see, has been a cynical committee exercise from overwhelming appointment of advocates for status quo and status quo ante to it's pre-ordained findings: "We formed a commission; the commission looked; there's no "there" there." As Paul McAvoy, Chair of Gerald Ford's Council of Economic Advisors allowed in 1979, externalities taxes are a good idea, but precisely because they would be effective, they would never be implemented. Trust me, McAvoy, an advocate for the conventional extract, burn, dump economic model, was no commie, not even a (OMG!) Fabian socialist. But the overwhelming POLITICAL problem with climate action is that it's a loser, a third rail, a no-win. The consequences are baked in after decades of neglect, double speak, spin and outright fabrication beginning long before 1984. Under such conditions, a guy like Churchill knew what to do, and say. BTW, thanks for the gun legislation. I appreciate that it cost you a pile of chips, but considering the condition, what else could you do?

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** Mary Cournane

**Email:** mfinola@gmail.com

**Comment:** This year's weather should make it very clear to all that we need to change our bad habits. We need a plan and we need to follow it starting NOW.

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** Mary Dollenmaier Dollenmaier

**Email:** mdollenmaier@gmail.com

**Comment:** Recycling is linked closely to climate change. Vermont MUST become a leader in reworking recycling bins/labels to be 100% effective with ubiquitous, consistent and easy to read labels, and making sure that landfill interests are not hindering effective recycling structure.

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** Carol-lee Lane

**Email:** accounting@discoverwriting.com

**Comment:** This commission did not represent Vermonters or the land we steward; it's membership represented short-term financial gain by corporate interests. The environmental and scientific expertise to actually fulfill the purpose of the Climate Action Commission was deliberately absent. The commission was a sham, a thin political ploy, and its results, unsurprisingly, are equally vacuous. Do it again, with real experts on climate science. Stop trying to flim flam Vermonters. It may be the only current strategy of the national Republican party, but it won't get you far in Vermont. One term at best.

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** Jeff Unsicker

**Email:** jeff.unsicker@sit.edu

**Comment:** I've just read a summary of the report. It's an incredible disappointment. Vermont should be leading the movement to limit climate change. We need a plan to do so. The report's unranked and already well known recommendations isn't a plan and won't get us where we need to go.

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** Barbara Forauer

**Email:** be4jay@cs.com

**Comment:** How disappointing to read the final report. Mr. Scott's words and actions do not align thus makes him not trustworthy. After this summer of excessive heat here in Vermont, how can one not accept that the world's climate is changing? We need to do all we can to protect and preserve our beautiful state. And Mr. Scott, that means you and your commission too! Wake up all of you.

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** JAMES WUERTELE

**Email:** wuerteles@myfairpoint.net

**Comment:** As Energy Coordinator for the Town of St. Johnsbury, I am horrified at the results of your commission. Now, you claim to want to respond, and I have no hope for any progress in Vermont through your action. I will report this doubt to my Town leadership and to other concerned citizens here.

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Comment:** I am a fan of VIPIRG and have been for many, many years. I trust their research and comments. So when they say your Climate Report is a hodge-podge and will not bring the results we need to combat what could be the end of the Earth as we know it, I believe them. So please put together a plan that will get us somewhere, stop supporting big business and polluting farms in Vermont and as the old saying goes "put your money where your mouth is."

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** Carl Bucholt

**Email:** carl.bucholt@comcast.net

**Comment:** Governor Scott, You should remember what happened to your predecessor. When ordinary folks like me felt like Shumlin became arrogant, he was almost defeated by a novice, and had the good sense to step aside. You created the Climate Action Comm and now you are poised to ignore their most important recommendations. Looks like arrogance to me! Carl Bucholt

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** Jerry Byrd

**Email:** byrdnestv@gmail.com

**Comment:** Gov. Scott, Your Climate Change Report has done exactly what you've wanted by stalling employment in renewable energy making Community Solar more difficult to put in place, by virtually eliminating Wind in the state when company actually moves here to build wind power at an affordable rate for Vermonters creating jobs. Remembering that you promised more jobs and technical training that would enhance our economy. I work with a solar company that cannot find qualified workers. What do they call that "talking out of both sides of your mouth"? Your Commission and their report is a complete failure and to think I came close to voting for you last time around.

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** erin yarrobino

**Email:** thecatlady2015@outlook.com

**Comment:** Climate is happening now. It has to be addressed.

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** Sue Clarke

**Email:** clarkesuearnie@gmail.com

**Comment:** Please create a practical, progressive climate action plan. Listen to the people of Vermont and not industry.

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** Betsy Brigham

**Email:** bbrigham5@yahoo.com

**Comment:** Dear Gov. Scott, I am writing to express my disappointment with the so-called final report of the Vermont Climate Action Commission. The report is a far cry from the "actionable plan to meet our climate and energy commitments," which was the sole task of this commission. Instead it is a cobbled-together re-statement of solutions that have been on the table for years (without any action toward pursuing them). Don't you dare use this as a political shield to pretend that you are serious about climate change. You stacked this commission with industry representatives and shackled it with restrictions from the get-go. Most Vermonters are seriously concerned about the threat of climate change, and want more from our elected leaders than insincere platitudes. Get with the program, or step aside so that others can

provide the leadership we so desperately need. This is the single most important issue of our time, and so far, you have failed us.

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:** Don Perdue

**Email:** don@studioperdue.com

**Comment:** I am deeply disappointed that both you as Governor and your Climate Action Commission have not been responsible enough to generate an actionable plan to positively deal with the present and long term effects of climate change here in Vermont. By failing to provide a realistic, actionable plan, you have set the state of Vermont back years at a time when there is no further leeway for inaction. Please reconsider the importance of acting on climate change stabilization policies and practices before any additional damage is incurred. Respectfully, Don Perdue P

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**Date:** 08/16/2018

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Comment:** I was hopeful that this report would be more actionable. It feels like this was created to check a box because it is a reiteration of solutions that have been circulated before. No path towards implementation was laid out. I feel like this is a big missed opportunity and hope there will be follow up to realize these opportunities.

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**Date:** 08/17/2018

**Name:** William April

**Email:** hiker@gmavt.net

**Comment:** I am very disappointed with the results of the VT Climate Action Commission. It does not give any direction since it only lists previous proposals. It does not have any credibility where it only had one environmental advocate. I certainly hope you can do better before the November election.

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**Date:** 08/17/2018

**Name:** Mary Meader

**Email:**

**Comment:** Dear Gov. Scott, We are One race, the Human Race. We have One home, Planet Earth. I voted for you last time but I will not do it again. This climate change report is a sham. Climate change is important and real to the American people along with the rest of the World. I will not support any candidate that does not respect this planet. You're obvious support and need of corporate sponsorship above the public good is shameful.

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**Date:** 08/17/2018

**Name:** Charles Monette

**Email:** cmonette76@gmail.com

**Comment:** Please look at my poem and article at [vermontviews.org](http://vermontviews.org) I ask the governor to consider introducing & helping to create a massive 'white' skin that would surround and float on top of the ocean waters of Antarctica & the Artic Circle. The reflection of the white surfaces might 'slow'down the melting until we get a handle on the greenhouse gas emissions. I realize this might not work, but think of the jobs that would be created in science, technology, labor, etc. Admittedly an enormous undertaking (like fighting a World War) that would require the cooperation of the countries in the Paris agreement, plus the good ole USA and any others. Please do more Charles Monette

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**Date:** 08/17/2018

**Name:** Jud Lawrie

**Email:** jud@lawrie.com

**Comment:** Governor Scott I have thanked you in the media and in person for the principled stand you took on gun safety legislation. However, I must now say I am quite saddened by your stance on climate change as evidenced by the disappointing final report of your Climate Action Commission. After all, climate change also affects the lives of many people; it's just not as immediately obvious. I'm hoping that after the November elections you will be willing to again act like a statesman and get behind meaningful climate change measures both here in Vermont and beyond. For our children and all those who will follow. Jud Lawrie Essex Junction

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**Date:** 08/17/2018

**Name:** Mia Moore

**Email:** miascamp@gmail.com

**Comment:** This is a huge disappointment. It's hard to believe that this commission's purpose was anything except to placate citizens while stalling on making any progress on the climate crisis. Get. To. Work. We have a serious problem here, and many many solutions. All we need is a real commitment to implementing them - incentives and investment in clean and renewable power, electrifying our fleet of vehicles, and making every home snug, efficient, and cozy.

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**Date:** 08/17/2018

**Name:** Marisa Keller

**Email:** mdkeller06@earlham.edu

**Comment:** It's extremely important to me (a 30-year-old lifelong Vermonter) that Vermont take bold actions to mitigate the effects of climate change and plan for the future by achieving the 90 percent renewables by 2050 goal. I read parts of the report, and I'm impressed and inspired by the vision it lays out. I hope that you, as governor, will champion this vision and start implementing the recommendations so that Vermont is prepared to meet the increasing challenges we will face as climate change progresses. One additional suggestion that I did not see mentioned in the report is biochar technology, which can convert a wide range of organic material into heat or even electricity without releasing its carbon into the atmosphere. The charcoal-like byproduct that results improves the quality of soil in farms and gardens. This technology is being introduced around the world in developing countries to replace smoky cook-fires and cookstoves, but its other applications are still being explored and it could prove an extremely useful tool for carbon sequestration. Worth keeping an eye on!

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**Date:** 08/17/2018

**Name:** Leeds Brewer

**Email:** leedsb@comcast.net

**Comment:** The Vermont Climate Action Commission report recently promulgated is so bland, meaningless and free from any substantive recommendation of action, we must wonder why time was wasted on its development. Page upon page of pointless bullet statements, many of which have been around (without action) for years, without positive recommendations for any implementation...why bother? A commission that appears to have been purposefully constructed to avoid any implementation of change or provide any specific direction for climate action (Staffed by members of the industries involved in the very pollution we need to avoid and 1 environmentalist? Come on!) seems also to be pre-designed to purposefully fail its mission. If we have to suffer through endless commission studies and reports, can we not at least have the appearance of constructive activity? The office of the governor needs to stop procrastinating, for the benefit of industry, and start taking actions that benefit the citizenry of Vermont.

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**Date:** 08/17/2018

**Name:** sandy

**Email:**

**Comment:** Gov Scott, You are acting like Trump. I am ashamed of you. I thought Vermont was different.

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**Date:** 08/18/2018

**Name:** Kathleen Bushey

**Email:** Cooter@gmavt.net

**Comment:** This summer has been eerily hot and scary to think of what weather is coming next. You and I can no longer wait to have an energy plan that addresses changing climate. Why waits with heads in the sand. Please address in your leadership capacity. The stakes are high.

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**Date:** 08/18/2018

**Name:** Lance Polya

**Email:** lpvt14@gmail.com

**Comment:** Gov. Scott--I so appreciated your position on meaningful gun control legislation. However, your climate change report lacks substance, specificity, and clear direction. I truly hope you will ignore the Commission's report and develop a more comprehensive policy that truly serves the needs of Vermonters. Thank you.

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**Date:** 08/18/2018

**Name:** Bonnie Kinney

**Email:** naturalgrowth1@gmail.com

**Comment:** Governor Scott, You and I are only here for a little while but our children's children and many generations of people depend on someone in your position to do the right thing for the planet and the economy. As the old saying goes, "you can't take it with you". Isn't it much more meaningful then, what we leave behind?

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**Date:** 08/19/2018

**Name:** Sheila Taylor

**Email:** staylor431@outlook.com

**Comment:** Your commission was bogus. There were no representatives from the world of ecology and environmental engineering. We cannot live on fossil fuels, and initiating a carbon tax will not only help limit the release of carbon dioxide in the air, but also provide opportunities for employment. Just look at British Columbia. They were worried that a carbon tax would devastate their economy, but instead business is booming. It's time to look beyond the box.

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**Date:** 08/19/2018

**Name:** Richard Moulton

**Email:** emoultonlg.com

**Comment:** I was very disappointed with the report put forth by the climate action commission. It appears that the commission was led by special interests who are more concerned with protecting the status quo verse adopting real change to address the climate catastrophe facing the world. It's no shock that Phil Scott continues to march to the Republican drum which is clearly more concerned with protecting profits verse protecting the planet. In the long run the failure to tackle climate change at its early stages will certainly have far larger negative economic consequences resulting from severe weather events (verse

forcing businesses to adapt and become more climate friendly). I will certainly keep this in mind the next time I visit the polls.

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**Date:** 08/21/2018

**Name:** Helen Scheerens

**Email:** Hscheer@outlook.com

**Comment:** Climate change is the most important issue of the day. Our children's future depends on the actions we take now. It's already almost too late, it's time to stop listening to oil, gas and call industry representatives and start listening to environmental scientists.

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**Date:** 08/22/2018

**Name:** Natalee Braun

**Email:** nataleefbraun@gmail.com

**Comment:** Dear Governor Scott, I appreciate that the recently-signed budget has provisions for a carbon pricing study - thank-you for your wisdom in recognizing the importance of that undertaking. I urge you to place the promotion of a just transition to clean energy as one of your top priorities in view of the climate crisis we are in the midst of. To do any less is to place Vermont far from leadership in the renewable energy revolution that is underway across the US and the world and to subject Vermont's citizens and natural resources to the increasing depredations of a warming climate. The recently published Climate Change Report confirms the challenges we are facing and visionary action is required in the direction of clean renewable energy at the fastest possible pace. Respectfully, Natalee Braun, Essex, VT

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**Date:** 08/22/2018

**Name:** Natalee Braun

**Email:** nataleefbraun@gmail.com

**Comment:** Gov. Scott, As a follow up to my previous email, I should clarify that the report that is of grave concern to me is the one indicating that we are losing ground in reaching our renewable energy goals. In light of that, the report from your commission does not provide a vigorous actionable plan to get us on course to meet the 90 percent renewable by 2050 benchmark. Natalee Braun

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**Date:** 08/26/2018

**Name:** Daniel Young

**Email:** dyoung6820@comcast.net

**Comment:** I have read with interest the final report of the Vermont Climate Action Commission. I am gratified to have such a clear set of priorities identified in response to the existential problem of climate change. The report is well organized and well done. I commend the authors on their good work with the information they had at hand.

I also need to express some criticisms as follows:

The report is deeply committed to reducing carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere as a solution to climate change. It is supported in this by state-of-the-art climate change science that defines climate change as "global warming", and calculates climate damage based upon the energy absorption and re-radiation properties of carbon dioxide. It is a flawed approach to climate change science based on a partial understanding of thermodynamic relationships that ignores a wide spectrum of effects that influence the changing climate.

The climate crisis is being sold to us as an energy and material balance problem, when, in fact, it is not a simple issue of energy accumulation (global warming) or matter accumulation (carbon dioxide in our atmosphere). Both of these kinds of analysis are relevant to the problem, but they are not the whole story, and excessive reliance on these mechanisms leads to erroneous results and misleading conclusions.

I have studied the thermodynamic relationships causing the climate to change for more than four years, and I have come to the conclusion that the state-of-the-art of climate change science is based largely on thermal and material balances which are fundamental to the First Law of thermodynamics, but that a large additional constraint on the climate is provided by the Second Law of thermodynamics. Ignoring the Second Law effects leads to miscalculations and misleading conclusions.

Out of a deep concern for this matter, I wrote a book, "Restoring Climate Stability by Managing Ecological Disorder - A Non-Equilibrium Thermodynamic Approach to Climate Change". The book is available on Amazon and in some local bookstores. As I have refined my view of these matters, I have written papers and delivered speeches clarifying the details of thermodynamic properties and relationships in ecosystems.

The most recent presentation was in May of this year to the Soil Carbon Coalition during their annual conference at Lake Morey resort. It proposes a Second Law model for energy flow mechanisms across the surface of the earth. The model clearly shows how the behavior of the climate is related to the functioning of the biosphere and the hydrosphere, and how lack of diversity in the biosphere and the atmosphere are indicators of increasing disorder in the earth system.

I would like to deliver a PowerPoint presentation to the Climate Action Commission that demonstrates Second Law relationships in ecosystems and climate change situations. I make this offer in order to clear up some of the confusion over climate change issues and to bring understanding into the divergent positions of the various climate advocacy groups.

Please consider hosting my presentation to environmentalists, policy makers, lawyers and other people who might be struggling to understand the impacts of climate change. It would likely improve the understanding of this complicated subject and act as a tool to increase our facility with basic relationships and facts.

I look forward to working with you toward these ends.

Daniel A. Young

Carbon Resources Research  
PO Box 99  
Hyde Park, VT 05655

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**Date:** 09/04/2018

**Name:** James & Kay Burde

**Email:** james@teiki.com

**Comment:** We would like to highlight the following points for attention in the Climate Change Report: 1) The critical need to double our investment in the state's Weatherization program to help it meet its years long backlog, 2) Expanded efforts to address Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHGs) from transportation, including expanding Electric Vehicle infrastructure and mass transit options, 3) Facilitating a rapid switch in fuels used for heating in Vermont, away from fossil fuels and toward cold climate heat pumps and advanced wood heat, and 4) Supporting the upcoming study by the nonpartisan Vermont Fiscal Office on the impacts of a carbon price in Vermont. Thank you.

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**Date:** 09/06/2018

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Comment:** Many of us in Vermont have been dedicating our lives to lessen the impact we make upon the environment. It is incredibly frustrating to work so hard to defend our climate by walking the walk, when I continue to see others who continue to disregard any solutions to lessen the impact of climate change. You, our representative, are in a position to make decisions to defend our climate. We, your citizens, are requesting you to take a stand, sooner rather than later, to make decisions to defend this earth we live on, our home that needs care and attention. There are many Vermont citizens who are living a clean life to lessen the impact we make. Please defend us also by making decisions to support our efforts.

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**Date:** 09/06/2018

**Name:** Ed Hutchinson

**Email:** ehutch@gmavt.net

**Comment:** I just read the Climate Action Commission final report.

Much of the report focuses on "smart growth" and economic expansion. We still live in a finite state on a finite planet. Any problem solution that depends on a market growth to succeed has already failed.

The shortfall in weatherization proposal (2007) for 20,000 homes by 2020 would take \$100,000,000 at the average cost per home to meet the 2020 goal. Proposing that the Governor and Treasurer poke around for weatherization money (by a Gov that will not raise a penny of new taxes) will not come up with a single million. We are 9 years into a 13 year project and are barely over the halfway point. There is no way this administration will reach the 2020 goal. Even with a very progressive administration it is unlikely that the 20,000 homes goal will be reached before 2030 (a decade behind schedule).

I believe that a decade ago there were about 100,000 (mostly aging) Vt homes that were presumed to exceed the 40kBtu/sqft minimum standard. The GMP and BED accomplishment of about 10,000 thermal retrofits is a small start. Together with the low income program accomplishment we are at perhaps 20% of the way to completion of retrofits. How will the other 80% be done? I'm not convinced that even 100% compliance with a 40kBtu/Sqft building standard would actually get us to our 2025 or 2030 GHG emissions targets for thermal energy.

The business and industrial sector has massive building thermal issues that are barely addressed in passive comments in the report (except for BGS and State Buildings). I can't say I trust BGS. I spent years working in the Pavilion. The place was locked up so tight the CO2 levels had to be monitored by VSEA to prevent worker illness. Even in spring and fall when the outside temperatures would be ideal, the air exchange was limited by permanently sealed windows. And there was the issue of locating the main air intake at the loading dock where trucks idled. The claim was that outside air in downtown Montpelier was frequently higher in CO2 than inside the building. I don't know how true that was.

Thermal labeling of new construction is a cop out. How about aggressive enforcement of building standards that would make labeling redundant! It should be a crime to build or offer for sale or occupancy any new building that does not conform to minimum energy standards, and the building codes should be adjusted to be considerably above the current minimums.

It is certain that transportation and building thermal are the elephants in the room, but domestic hot water is probably included in a lot of the residential thermal calculations as many homes have hot water produced by the same heat source that provides heating. Up to a third of a household's energy consumption is for domestic hot water. That could be reduced by more than a third with heat pumps, or

nearly eliminated with solar hot water (which is a natural energy storage mechanism if the tank is large enough). At least the report considers water heating as a strategy, but devotes little time or funding recommendations for hot water.

So much emphasis in the report is on electrification of our transportation and thermal loads to meet GHG targets. EVs and heat pumps enough to reach our emission goals will put a huge load on the grid.

We pride ourselves on having a very "green grid", but to the extent that it relies on Hydro Quebec it may not be as green as we pretend. The deforestation required by the massive dams and the decomposition of nutrients in the flooded land is apparently causing massive reduction of photosynthetic capture, and considerable methane and carbon dioxide release from the water. If we depend on electricity to solve our problem we better come up with some greener sources of electricity. And the transmission and distribution losses from HQ are very large. I applaud the grid modernization that includes distributed generation, storage technology, and load management. Will the utility sector be able to supply the load with GHG free power?

The agricultural and wood-products comments that seek to preserve working farm and forest land are nicely done. But nothing was said about turning tens of thousands of acres of Chittenden Co farm and forest land into Connecticut. And other counties are also spreading out suburbia. Rutland, Franklin, Orleans, Addison, and even Washington counties are sprawling over productive land. We have been on a development boom for more than half a century that has been condemning productive land. It can't continue for long at the present rate! The transportation resources demanded by continued expansion will create GHG increases no matter how much we electrify.

Edward Hutchinson  
2053 East Hill Rd  
Plainfield, VT 05667

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**Date:** 09/07/2018

**Name:** Caitlin Hollister

**Email:** caitlinhollister@gmail.com

**Comment:** I strongly urge the governor to adopt and implement these recommendations. I'm counting on the governor to continue Vermont's tradition of strong environmental leadership. We cannot afford to stay on the same track or slow down...rather, we need to accelerate our efforts to reduce our environmental impacts and combat climate change. The crisis is already impacting us and the effect on future generations will be devastating if we don't take dramatic action. Thank you.

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**Date:** 09/11/2018

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Comment:** The Climate Change Report is an incredible compilation of information and recommendations and the Commission is to be commended for all of its work. The one piece of information that I could not find - and seems important - is the contribution of the military to our greenhouse gas emissions. Is the fuel use (and thus GHG emissions) of the Air National Guard jets and of the large military land vehicles that come and go from Jericho embedded in the transportation section numbers? What percentage of the transportation sector contribution is from military GHG emissions? Is it significant and can it be addressed?

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**Date:** 09/24/2018

**Name:** L. Christopher Company

**Email:** ccompany@windhamregional.org

**Comment:**

Dear Governor Scott and Climate Action Commission,

In reference to the Vermont Climate Action Commission's (referred to as "Commission") report released July 31 for public comment, the Windham Regional Commission's Energy Committee (referred to as "Committee") submits the following comments for consideration. We note that we were disappointed by the lack of reference to the plans completed by the regional planning commissions and municipalities under Act 174. The Commission has the opportunity to make the implementation of these plans a priority in order to achieve the State's greenhouse gas emission goals.

1) The Committee urges the Commission to refer to and recommend collaboration with regional planning commissions and municipalities in the implementation of the Regional and Municipal Energy Plans that have received determinations of energy compliance per Act 174 and its related standards. We would urge the Commission to identify all state agency initiatives that relate to climate change, energy, and energy efficiency and how those initiatives relate to regional and town energy plan implementation. We also ask the Commission to identify sources of funding that regions and municipalities can use to implement their Act 174 plans. Many of the recommendations within this report suggest further study in areas which the energy plans have covered. Given the data, modeling, and process supported by the DPS and developed on regional and local levels to identify targets and policies for increased efficiency, conservation, and energy generation, a leading recommendation should be to implement these plans.

2) The Committee notes that the Governor requested the Commission "develop a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change..." The document submitted has a compiled list of recommendations but is not presented in a way which clearly identifies the relative effectiveness and/or prioritization of each in achieving greenhouse gas emissions and climate change goals. The Committee suggests the report reflect the most impactful recommendations which legislators can then target with policies and funding priorities.

3) The State's GHG emissions goal of 40% reduction below 1990 levels is becoming harder to achieve as the State's emissions trend upwards rather than downwards. The report acknowledges this, however, the recommendations do not reflect actions which would effectively and necessarily result in meeting the goal. The Governor stated "solutions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions must spur economic activity, inspire and grow Vermont businesses, and put Vermonters on a path to affordability." Given the information from the newly released greenhouse gas inventory, the Committee urges the Commission to expand the scope beyond the goals of economic growth to goals of achieving meaningful progress to reduce emissions.

4) In the Home and Workplace Recommendation 2, add amending clean air rule to accommodate modern wood heat fuels in addition to pellets. Semi-dry chip fuel is not only an efficient and clean burning fuel comparable to pellets, it is also an effective way to support the Vermont Forestry Industry and economic development.

5) Prioritize the recommendations which decrease single occupancy vehicle trips. The greatest energy saving is with energy we don't use. Electrification is important and impactful, however the cost barriers are high. The most impactful measure would be to combine trips into fewer electric vehicles.

6) Continuing the State's trend of increasing renewable energy generation is critical to the success of reducing emissions, particularly with the emphasis of transportation fleet and heating fuel switch to electric. The report must strongly support increased renewable energy generation within the State.

7) The Committee recognizes a gap in the recommendations as it pertains to reducing our fossil fuel residential consumption. While in support of the goals of weatherization and retrofits for low to moderate income families, we don't have the workforce with the necessary skill set to accomplish the goals. The Committee recommends to set as a goal that 70% of our contractors have an industry recognized credential by 2025. This parallels the State College System and VSAC's recommendation that 70% of working age adults have a college degree or credential of value by 2025.

8) The WRC encourages careful consideration of the importance and central role that broadband infrastructure plays in enabling a smart grid of the future that can rely on distributed storage systems for resiliency. Our state's energy/climate goals cannot be met without a robust broadband network that enables smart connections and distributions.

The Windham Regional Commission thanks the Climate Action Commission's work in developing this report and for the opportunity to submit comments on it.

Sincerely,

L. Christopher Company  
Executive Director

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**Date:** 09/28/2018

**Name:** Bob Mckearin

**Email:** mckearin@burlingtontelecom.net

**Comment:** I write to propose adding a Recommendation to the CAC Report for reducing GHGs: enforce existing speed limits on all state highways including the Interstate system.

Because the transportation sector accounts for most of the GHGs emitted in Vermont and because of the urgent need to reduce them, we need to include an initiative that will reduce GHG tail pipe emissions as soon as possible. While all of the 16 Recommendations in the Report that address transportation are important, none of them will have a significant near-term impact on GHG's from that sector.

Reducing the actual speed of traffic to the posted speed will work simply because slower speeds reduce fuel consumption which in turn reduces GHG emissions.

The factual basis is as follows:

- Science tells us that every gallon of gasoline contributes 19 pounds of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere;
- Science also tells us that the most efficient speed for a motor vehicle is generally accepted to be between 40 and 55 or 60 mph. The 50-55 mph speed limit for state highways is right in the sweet spot. The interstate system, at 65 mph speed limit, is close. But, a majority of motorists exceed those limits, as anyone driving at the speed limit on almost any highway in the state knows;
- According to studies backed by the Department of Energy, driving at 65 mph generates 9% less GHG compared with 70 mph, 15% less compared with 75 mph and 20% less compared with 80;
- Vehicles registered in Vermont traveled 7.3 billion miles in 2015 at an average of 25.6 miles per gallon combined highway mileage. That translates to more than 285,156,000 gallons of gas consumed generating more than 2,458,000 metric tons of CO2 (at 19 lbs from each gal.) (2015 distance and mileage data from the 2017 Vermont Transportation Energy Profile report).

An initiative to enforce the current speed limits in Vermont will meet all of the Governor's criteria for action:

- 1 it will reduce GHG emissions, reduce costs for businesses and increase spending power of citizens for non-fuel purchases;
- 2 it will directly engage the citizens of the state (and visitors) in the fight to mitigate climate change without imposing any financial burden;
- 3 it will reduce the carbon impact of Vermonters at a very limited cost (for education and increased law enforcement, perhaps offset by some ticket revenue) in a way that will save money for everyone. Additional benefits will include cleaner air and reduced injuries and death from accidents.

Perhaps we can "control our own destiny" and perhaps Vermont can be a leader in addressing climate change with economic solutions that support community health and prosperity for the future. But, we won't do either unless we act now.

Enforcing the speed limit most likely will achieve a GHG reduction of 10% or more from the transportation sector. For the foreseeable future gas and diesel vehicles will dominate the transportation sector. It is essential that we reduce their impact now, while vehicles evolve to EVs and we make other transportation adjustments described in the Report.

I urge you to endorse and press for implementation of this proposal.

Thank you.

Bob McKearin  
Burlington, Vt.  
802 862-4372

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**Date:** 09/28/2018

**Name:** Charles Baker, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

**Email:** cbaker@ccrpcvt.org

**Comment:** The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Vermont Climate Action Commission Final Report. We appreciate the work of the Vermont Climate Action Commission and find the Report to be a comprehensive collection of recommendations to accelerate change in all sectors to address climate change.

CCRPC concurs with the general comments provided by Jim Sullivan from Bennington County Regional Commission. We agree with his suggestion to recognize and support the comprehensive energy planning work that the RPC's have been doing at the regional and municipal levels, and his suggestion to identify the most critical areas for action where we can expect the greatest effect. Based on our 2018 ECOS Plan, Chittenden County's Regional Plan, Enhanced Energy Plan, Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy in one, our suggestions for the most critical areas for state action and support are:

- **Energy Efficient Land Use:** The 2018 ECOS Plan calls for 80% of new development in areas planned for growth. This type of development results in compact land use, less transportation energy, and preservation of natural areas for wildlife habitat and carbon sinking. Therefore, we suggest that the report call for increased investments in water, sewer, and transportation infrastructure as these are critical to making development attractive in our area's planned for growth.

- Transforming the Transportation Sector: The 2018 ECOS Plan calls for a reduction in fossil fuel consumption in the transportation sector, including a shift to electric vehicles. Therefore, we suggest that the report call for financial incentives and infrastructure to support a relatively rapid shift to electric vehicles (EVs) in the passenger vehicle fleet.
- Transforming the Heating Sector: The 2018 ECOS Plan calls for a reduction in fossil fuel consumption in the heating sector both through a reduction in energy use and a switch in fuel types. Therefore, we suggest that the report call for expansion of weatherization assistance programs to reduce heat energy consumption; and increase incentives for advanced wood heating, cold climate heat pumps, and biogas technologies to enable widespread adoption of non-fossil fuel-based heating systems.
- Generating Renewable Energy and Grid Modernization: The 2018 ECOS Plan encourages increased renewable energy generation siting in Chittenden County to meet the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan's (CEP) goal of generating 90% of energy from renewable sources by 2050. This is especially needed to meet the demand for electricity in the heating and transportation sectors. We would like to see all types of renewable energy generation remain feasible, including making sure net metering remains appealing for consumers, certain technologies are not excluded, and all energy planning in the future is well-coordinated with utilities and VELCO to ensure a modern, functional and resilient grid.

While the Report's recommendations touch on these areas, we would like to see a more purpose driven section that calls for progress and financial support in these four areas. We understand the challenges in prioritizing and defining specific avenues for state support, but we hope these comments help with that effort.

Thank you for this opportunity. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like anything further.

Sincerely,

Charles Baker  
Executive Director

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**Date:** 09/28/2018

**Name:** Peter Gregory, Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission

**Email:** pgregory@trorc.org

**Comment:**

Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission supports the work of the VCAC and the charge by the Governor to "develop a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and combat climate change" in ways that are inclusive of all Vermonters, advance affordability, and enhance the economy. TRORC supports all of the recommendations in the report, and offers the following suggestions for additions in the spirit of making the recommendations even stronger or more effective.

TRORC works in many areas on behalf of our towns, but our longstanding focus has been on transportation and land use planning, and more recently energy planning. Those areas will be the focus of our comments. However, we also have been involved in emergency management for decades and, though the report does not use the language of emergencies or disasters, these climate action recommendations hope to avoid such events. Our comments are made in the context of the best available data on the effects of climate change in Vermont, now and in the future. Simply put, all Vermonters are already affected by climate change, and will feel those effects more deeply in the years ahead, even with aggressive action by the state and others. Without aggressive action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, there is just catastrophe. There are options that are more affordable than others, but all are more

affordable than inaction, whose costs are simply incalculable as they result in a state no longer recognizable as Vermont. It is in this framework that making good recommendations and following up on them vigorously will help us retain what we can of our state. There is still time to take meaningful action, and Vermont has never shied away from thinking that the actions of even a small state have power on the national and world stage.

Only in the last few years have RPCs taken on a substantial role in energy planning. Act 174 works to enhance regional and municipal energy planning, providing a baseline and improvement plans across all energy sectors: electric, thermal and transportation. RPCs can continue to do this by working with partners and stakeholders on energy efficiency and conservation efforts; focusing on energy saving land use and transportation planning; working to promote solar developments through local and regional planning; and assisting in crafting regulatory language such that power generation facilities get built and meet community standards. The report stresses the need for massive new amounts of electric vehicles and heat pumps, but fails to urge where the electricity to power these is coming from. The report does note the recent significant installation of solar generation, but this is still far below what is required to meet state goals. We find that the report lacks in furthering the installation of solar energy, both for private and commercial generation and suggest:

- A new recommendation added to further the creation of more solar power generation, such as through requiring new commercial structures to put on rooftop solar where it is cost-effective.

The report supports more wood-based thermal heat, as does TRORC, so long as it is based on sustainable harvests. To that end, TRORC supports Recommendations # 1-7, We also offer the following suggestions:

- In Recommendation #4, an action should be added to develop and promote municipal regulatory standards that would serve to further this goal, primarily by requiring energy generation and conservation measures be done in buildings where life-cycle costs show these to be beneficial.
- In Recommendation # 7, as in Recommendation # 22 noted below, RPC administrative capacity can be critical to municipalities actually being able to carry out implementation projects, and this should be noted.
- Later in Recommendation # 53, we think that RPCs can be effective in helping the permit process both achieve desired development while also protecting community values.

TRORC and our fellow RPCs have been integral to transportation planning in Vermont for a generation. While state/interstate roads are obviously the backbone of the highway network, most of the transportation decisions in terms of mileage are made at the municipal level. It is at this level that walkability takes place and transit needs to function. TRORC supports the recommendations around transportation and offers the following suggestions:

- In Recommendation # 20, an action should be added about increasing private investment in transit during permitting. New large generators of traffic could be required under local permitting (if bylaws so provided) and in Act 250 to incorporate transit stops (or the space for future stops) and electric vehicle charging stations into their site plans, even when such service is not presently serving the area in order to accommodate the transit that we hope to have.
- In Recommendation # 22, it should be acknowledged that RPCs play an integral role in municipal implementation, as that action is often dependent on getting and administering grants, a capacity not present in many municipalities without the assistance of RPC staff.

The report addresses land use planning on pages 42-53. Pages 42-43 lay out the sound basis that where we develop drives energy use as we move around. The report frankly states what planners know, that we have written many plans based on smart growth, but failed to implement them. It could also be said that we have written many plans encouraging smart growth, but stopping short of requiring it. We applaud the commission's direction to have recommendations that lead "to actual smart growth on the ground (page 43).

We support all of the recommendations (# 25-33) in this section of the report and offer the following additional suggestions:

- Add RPCs to Recommendation # 28, TRORC has been involved with our health care providers for several years. Our regional sustainability plan calls for health to be addressed in town and regional plans and our regional plan has a health chapter.
- Add RPCs to Recommendation #30. One of the failures of planning is that the development of plans is too often separated from the implementation of plans, RPCs will be the lead mechanism to achieve Recommendation # 32, which is how communities will help protect large forest blocks, so it follows that when they are actually being protected through purchases or easements, RPCs and towns are also part of that process.
- Add RPCs to Recommendation # 33 and expand to local regulations. Most development, especially the critical stage of subdivision, does not go through Act 250 but rather just through permitting under local regulations, Most of these regulations are written by RPC staff working with towns. It stands to reason that the good work done in planning under Recommendation #32 should be given legs under Recommendation # 33, thus helping planners and plans move to implement the report's desire to make change on the ground.

Urban trees, both on commercial and public sites, that are suitable for the expected future climate will perform an important role in keeping these areas cool. To this end, we suggest:

- Expand Recommendation # 40 to include RPCs and municipalities, and add an action to further the installation and maintenance of shade trees in the urban environment through municipal investment as well as through local regulatory standards.

Regional Planning Commissions could also be the vehicle through which implementation funding for energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energy promotion is disseminated. RPCs proven ability to pass through funding to vital projects is illustrated by ARRA (American Recovery and reinvestment Act) projects, FEMA buyout efforts following Tropical Storm Irene, and current Grants In Aid and Better Roads transportation grants. RPCs understand the needs of their towns and can effectively work with them to implement solutions.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment and our best wishes in implementation.

Sincerely,  
Peter G. Gregory,  
Executive Director

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**Date:** 09/30/2018

**Name:** Catherine Dimitruk

**Email:** cdimitruk@nrpcvt.com

**Comment:** Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) is pleased to offer comments on the Vermont Climate Action Commission (VCAC) Final Report. NRPC supports the work of the VCAC and Governor Scott's interest in ensuring Vermont's strategies to reduce

greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change are inclusive of all Vermonters. NRPC has reviewed the report, supports the recommendations and actions, and is prepared to partner with state agencies and others in implementing this final report. NRPC's comments focus on transportation, and relate to implementing the goals and policies in NRPC's regional plan and regional energy plan.

#### Public Transit

NRPC has been a regional partner in public transit for two decades, beginning with NRPC's role creating and developing the region's first transit organization. This commitment to transit is because NRPC recognizes that public transit supports economic development, enables Vermonters to work, decreases negative impacts on Vermont's environment and reduces the need for costly infrastructure such as parking garages. Because of the additional benefits of public transit, it is crucial that actions around climate change place expansion of public transit on equal footing with the promotion of electric vehicles. The final report has two recommendations related to transit vehicles, 18 and 19. NRPC supports this focus on ensuring that Vermont has modern electric vehicles necessary for transit operations. Vehicles are only part of the solution; support for transit operations must be part of the strategy.

We recommend several changes to recommendation 20. The recommendation itself is a broad goal, one that NRPC supports. To make this section more prominent, NRPC suggests that each of the action steps in recommendation 20 could be individual recommendations with associated action steps. For example, one action step (#2) addresses increasing transit operations, yet only tangentially. "Work with transit providers, legislature, and regional planning commissions to identify opportunities to increase State and local investment in public transportation." This action step should be a recommendation, with specific actions to help implement a new funding mechanism for transit. The reality is that increased investment in public transit is needed simply to maintain current operational levels, and the current funding system is not adequate. Increased investment is absolutely crucial if transit is to serve more Vermonters and be part of our climate change strategy.

#### Sidewalks and Paths

Recommendation 22 is to "Increase programs and public infrastructure to support walking and biking in Vermont." In the background statement it is noted that "Lack of safe pleasant sidewalks and bike lanes/paths are one huge barrier to this being a viable mode for more people."

The action steps primarily address programs to support biking and walking where infrastructure already exists. Only one action step begins to address new infrastructure, by providing guidance to municipalities on including transportation master plans in local comprehensive plans. Additional actions steps must be included related to funding and constructing new paths, sidewalks and bike lanes. Suggested action steps include: providing guidance to municipalities on including requirements in local regulations; ensuring that state investments in roads, bridges and buildings include bike and pedestrian infrastructure; and, identify funding sources or creative financing options to provide non-federal support for municipal construction of infrastructure.

In addition to the comments above, NRPC supports fully the comments submitted by Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission and Bennington County Regional Commission and urges the VCAC to consider their recommendations.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Catherine Dimitruk | Executive Director  
Northwest Regional Planning Commission | 75 Fairfield Street, St. Albans, VT 05478

**Date:** 09/30/2018

**Name:** Scott Hicks

**Email:** shicks.vt@gmail.com

**Comment:** Dear Members of the Commission, The VCAC Report should include passive solar technologies and measures as part of Vermont's strategy for reducing and mitigating global climate change. It is puzzling that the report makes no mention of passive solar systems. Passive solar technologies offer simple and cost effective methods of heating our homes and commercial buildings. A well insulated single family home in Vermont can easily derive more than half of its annual heating budget by incorporating passive solar design elements such as a sunroom, a solar greenhouse, or south facing windows with insulating shades. Passive solar design elements are an excellent complement to energy conservation measures. The building should incorporate thermal mass to store and slowly release the captured solar energy. Passive solar designs can be incorporated into new or existing buildings. Vermont and New Hampshire were leaders in the U.S.A. in passive solar in the 1970s and 1980s, but since that time those ideas seem to have faded from the public forum in favor of more high-technology solutions such as photovoltaics and wind energy. Combined with energy conservation measures, passive solar technologies have resulted in buildings in Vermont whose annual energy budgets are much less than half of the average building. Vermonters such as Doug Taff and the late Robert Holdridge of Hinesburg designed groundbreaking buildings that were used as examples nationwide of how designing with the sun can provide large energy savings in cost effective ways. The first nationwide conference on solar greenhouses was held at Marlboro College in 1977, where then Rep. Jim Jeffords was the keynote speaker. Garden Way Sunrooms became the no. 2 greenhouse company in the nation in 1984. Beth Sachs and the late Blair Hamilton were pioneers in the area of passive solar retrofits, along with their phenomenal work with the Vermont Energy Investment Corp. that they co-founded in 1986. The New England Solar Energy Association that was headquartered in Brattleboro was a strong advocate for passive solar for many years, sponsoring national solar energy conferences and publishing a solar magazine. There are dozens of other examples. One of the most significant advantages of passive solar technologies is that the issue of siting is non-existent. As we have seen, concerns over siting of large-scale wind energy or photovoltaic installations have often caused controversies, increased timelines and expenses, and legal issues. With passive solar, the building is the collector, so there are no siting issues outside of the normal process for building permits and zoning. Admittedly, not every existing building nor new building site has enough solar exposure to make passive solar feasible, but a large number do, especially for new buildings. Another advantage of passive solar systems is that a majority of the money needed for the design and construction is spent in the communities in or near where the building is located. The funding goes to building contractors, carpenters, architects, and local lumber yards or building supply businesses. This is in contrast to photovoltaic or wind energy systems, where a significant portion of the investment goes to the out-of-state companies that manufacture the systems. Developing passive solar as a vibrant part of Vermont's building portfolio would reduce the use of fossil fuels while sustaining Vermont's economy. The Vermont Climate Action Plan that is now being finalized by the state government should include much stronger and more extensive measures to encourage the use of passive solar designs and technologies. The plan should include the following elements to foster and facilitate the use of passive solar technologies in both new construction and retrofits: • Plans and funding for incentives. • Capital availability. • Technical assistance for designers and builders. • Improvements in building codes and standards. • Public education. There are decades of work to draw upon in formulating this portion of the plan – technical principles, design tools, economic justification, and methods of working with designers, builders, and the public. Partnering with Green Mountain Power would be an excellent way to build upon that company's outstanding leadership in the use of renewable energy by an electric utility. Going forward, Vermont cannot afford to overlook this significant source of clean renewable energy. The principles of passive solar design were extensively researched and documented in the late 1970s and early 1980s. For several years there were annual international passive solar energy

technical conferences attended by thousands of professionals each year. The US Department of Energy sponsored the development of design and modelling tools to be used by designers and builders. Passive solar tax credits were implemented by Congress. Unfortunately, the vast majority of new construction that has been built in Vermont (and the rest of the country) since that time has not incorporated passive solar designs. For over a third of a century we have wasted the opportunity to have Vermont's building stock utilize the free and widely available resource of passive solar heating. We must change this trend. There are simple and straightforward policies that can be put in place by the state government, by Vermont's utilities, and by the building industry. Finally, there was an excellent study published by Ohio State University in 2007 that focused on the question of why passive solar technology has not been adopted more widely. This study, by Vicki Garrett, M.S., and Tomas M. Koontz, Ph.D., stated this in its introduction: "Despite the potential for large energy savings at low cost, passive solar design has been adopted only rarely in the U.S. This raises a fundamental question: Why has passive solar technology not been adopted? Rational consumer behavior theory predicts that homebuyers would demand a product if it increases their expected benefits. Yet this is clearly not the case with passive solar design. The study concludes with recommendations for policy makers, and this final paragraph: Without profits to be made by powerful change agents, even low-cost innovations that offer great social goods and individual benefits seem unlikely to spread. More effort by governments and marketing resources for non-profits is necessary for passive solar design and other low-cost measures to become viable market forces. These social goods are probably destined to remain orphaned innovations with little possibility of widespread adoption, unless they become part of a successful government and non-profit intervention to conserve energy." Here is a link to the study: <https://ess.osu.edu/sites/essl/files/imce/What%20Can%20We%20Learn%20from%20the%20Failure%20of%20Adaption%20of%20Passive%20Solar%20Houses.pdf> I highly recommend that the commission consider the recommendations of the Ohio State study. Best wishes to the Commission as you conclude this phase of your work. As evidence of my credentials for offering these comments, I offer the following qualifications: "One year of graduate study in Climatology at the University of Wisconsin, 1976-1977. Wrote a Master of Science thesis at the University of Wisconsin in 1979 entitled, "A Net Energy Analysis of a Food and Heat Producing Solar Greenhouse." A condensed version of this thesis was published in the Proceedings of the 2nd National Conference on Energy Conserving Solar Heated Greenhouses, April 6-8, 1979. Assistant Project Manager for the Solar Applications Branch of the Tennessee Valley Authority from 1979 to 1981. Co-founder of Garden Way Sunrooms of Charlotte, Vermont, in 1981. Designed and contracted for the construction of a superinsulated passive solar house in Underhill, Vermont in 1982. The 1,400 square foot home requires only one cord of wood for its total annual heating budget. The house experiences about 1,000 more degree-days annually than the climate of Burlington. Author of seven technical papers on passive solar technologies. Inventor or co-inventor of 43 patents and patents pending. Sincerely, Scott D. Hicks P.O. Box 14 Underhill Center, VT 05490 802-899-4772 shicks.vt@gmail.com Please note that this comment is being submitted both via email and on the website provided for public comments. I apologize for the redundancy, but I wanted to ensure that these comments were timestamped before the end of the public comment period on 9/30/18.

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**Date:** 09/30/2018

**Name:** thomas murray

**Email:** tmurray@vermontgas.com

**Comment:** We all share an environmental imperative to build a sustainable future—one which will entail deep reductions in carbon emissions. We applaud the Commission for its work in developing a comprehensive report. As an Energy Efficiency Utility (EEU), our team at Vermont Gas is dedicated to giving Vermont families and businesses the tools to help achieve our state's carbon reduction goals. Every household that converts to Vermont Gas service from propane or heating oil immediately reduces their carbon footprint by 16-27% and reduces their fuel costs by 20%. In addition, we offer all customers access to our award-winning efficiency programs, such as free energy audits, rebates for

upgrading older equipment to more efficient models, as well as grants and special financing to insulate homes. These efficiency upgrades can reduce household energy usage by another 10-40%. All in, a Vermont Gas customer has the ability to reduce their carbon footprint more than the State's Comprehensive Energy Plan 2025/2035 and Statutory 2028 Goals, all while reducing their energy bills. In 2018, Vermont Gas became one of the first utilities to offer a renewable adder program. Our VGS Renewable Natural Gas Program provides another tool for our customers to reduce their carbon footprint and invest in local, farm-based renewables. Vermont Gas stands ready to work with the Commission in achieving these goals.

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